

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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CONTACT: Jeff Duncan

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or Israel Klein

(202) 225-2836

NORTH KOREA PULLS OUT OF NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY, INTENSIFIES NUCLEAR CRISIS

Markey calls on Bush Administration to immediately initiate crisis-ending dialogue

Washington, DC: Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and co-chairman of the Bipartisan Task Force on Nonproliferation, today released the following statement in response to press reports regarding North Korea's decision to withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty:

Rep. Markey stated, "North Korea's announcement that it is withdrawing from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty demands a tough and vigorous response by both the United States and the United Nations. The very future of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is at stake. Every one of the 187 signatories of this critical pact is now asking itself 'what are the consequences of unilaterally withdrawing from the international consensus against nuclear proliferation and dabbling in a little nuclear development ourselves?' How we handle North Korea's bid to use nuclear blackmail as a negotiating tool is a watershed moment for the world.

"It is clearly time for the Bush Administration to take the long overdue step of going to the U.N. Security Council and seeking adoption of a resolution strongly condemning North Korea for its violations of international law, demanding that it immediately rejoin the nuclear non-proliferation regime and come back into compliance with its nuclear non-proliferation obligations, and providing for a range of sanctions and penalties if the fail to do so. So far, the Bush Administration has failed to do this.

"While the Administration's willingness to engage in direct bilateral talks with the North Koreans is welcome, clearly the North Koreans have failed to fully comprehend the serious consequences of their misbehavior. Action by the Security Council would be useful in further isolating and pressuring the North Koreans to reconsider their reckless and provocative actions.

"If the North Koreans are willing to rejoin the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, let the international inspectors back in, and agree to the verified dismantlement of their covert nuclear weapons programs under international supervision, there is still time to get to a peaceful resolution of this crisis that addresses North Korea's security concerns and energy needs in a non-nuclear fashion"

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